[84 cont.]

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342

Fig. 15. Women and children in front of a trader's house (G. Küppers-Loosen Coll.)

291 Edge-Partington illustrates wider ornamental belts, which apparently are patterned with shell disks in a fashion similar to the arm bands (2). According to Dillon, bunches of fragrant herbs

[824]

2. Edge-Partington, I, 166, Nos. 2-3.

are worn in the belt, front and back (3).

3. Dillon, p. 315.

301 As has been said, the women wear far fewer ornaments than the men (4). Those that they do wear, however, correspond to

4. Joest in Baessler, p. 378.

[93 cont.]

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516
291
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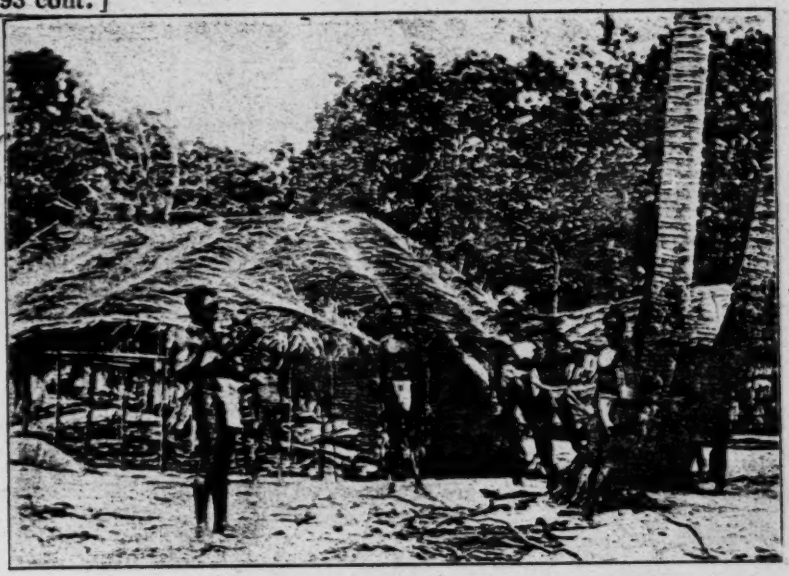

Fig. 22. Village Scene. (G. Küppers-Loosen Coll.)

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Fig. 23. Beach Scene. In connection with Fig. 22, the arrangement of the houses in a row along the shore can be seen. (G. Küppers-Loosen Coll.)

/156 cont./

Today, besides Mr. Matthews, only one missionary of the Melanesian Mission periodically lives on Nitendi, and colonization by Whites has never been very great. Thus there is little direct contact between Whites and natives on the island itself.

The inhabitants of Nitendi do not enjoy a very good reputation and are regarded as war-like and aggressive, probably not entirely unjustly, for Mendaña himself, the discoverer of the island, was greeted with a hail of arrows, even before he landed. This was the customary welcome accorded almost every stranger in Melanesia, however, and if elsewhere strangers were first induced to land then attacked, this in itself shows the more candid and more courageous character of the Nitendi men. And in fact, they seem candid and not very crafty, at least in comparison with the inhabitants of the New Hebrides. Now that they have become accustomed to generally peaceful intercourse with Whites as a result of missions and recruitment, they are, in contrast to other Melanesians, gay, trustful, and obliging, even in front of Whites. Only a slight infraction of their etiquette, however, arouses spontaneous enmity. Then they reach for the bow and arrow, but their anger quickly subsides, especially if they do not have the advantage, and a payment will usually atone for the crime. Often it seems as though they fight only to satisfy their laws. The beginnings of gratitude are there.

A sense for the comic is strongly developed. There is great fondness for ridicule, and their wit seems to be keen and to the point. A man's weak side is grasped in a moment and forever afterward it is laughed at and ridiculed. They have no compassion. Other people's suffering leaves them cold or amuses them, whereas their own pain is very strongly felt, not so much chronic suffering as acute injury.

Animals are tortured out of carelessness, but domestic animals are well cared for. Children are treated tenderly (1),

1. [Probably everywhere the smaller children are carried by the mother on the left hip in the bark-cloth shawl,

/156 cont./

•854 the larger children riding on the back (male children by the father). Documentation for Tumotu: O'Ferrall, Santa Cruz and the Reef Islands, the section "A New School Village"; for the Reef Islands: Coombe, plate facing p. 211, and Speiser, Südsee, Ill. 94, and 96.]

855 Children are treated tenderly (1),
[562] but they seem to love them chiefly because they are entertaining. The woman is apparently despised, but there are cases of conjugal love.

181 /157/ The bargaining instinct is strongly pronounced,
437 but they are not dishonest or particularly avaricious in trading. On the other hand, the people are rather thievish, and to be sure not altogether because they are accustomed to a certain communism, as seems to be the case on Polynesian islands.

574 The visitor to a village is usually taken to the men's house, where he is offered a clean mat and a headrest and is served food as a token of hospitality (1). According to Coombe,

1. [Speiser, Südsee, p. 293. Coombe, p. 180, mentions the extravagant generosity of the Nitendi people toward
[576] strangers. Yet etiquette requires that one not talk much with a guest (ibid., p. 182).]

[576] p. 182, however, it is improper to show pleasure over a gift
[931] because this implies that the giver has made a great sacrifice
[436] and is a poor man. They like to show a guest their possessions,
[467] especially the best roll of feather money. Also, the men are not unwilling to show their skill in weaving and plaiting nets.
181 This brings about a certain familiarity, so that one easily forms too favorable an opinion of the people, until he again has occasion to observe their baser instincts.